1416. 3

ADVENTURES
OF
BAMFYLDE MOORE CAREW,
For more than Forty Years
KING OF THE BEGGARS.

PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. & T. FORDYCE,
15, GREY STREET, NEWCASTLE.

ADVENTURES OF

BAMFYLDE MOORE CAREW.

MR. Bamfylde Moore Carew was the son of a clergyman, near Tiverton, in Devonshire, and born in 1693. He was tall and majestic, his limbs strong & well proportioned, his features regular, and his countenance open and ingenuous, bearing the resemblance of a good-natured mind. At 12 years of age he was put to Tiverton school, where he soon got a considerable knowledge of the Latin & Greek tongues, so as to be fitted for the University, that in due time he might make a figure in the church, for which his father designed him; but here a new exercise engaged his attention, namely, that of hunting, in which he soon made great progress. The Tiverton scholars had command of a fine cry of hounds, which gave Carew frequent opportunities of indulging in the sport, and getting acquainted with John Martin, Thomas Coleman, & John Escott, young gentlemen of the best rank and fortune. One day a farmer came to school, to complain of a deer, with a collar on his neck, that was running about his farm, doing much damage, and desired them to kill it. They proceeded next day to execute the farmer's wish, in doing which they

trespassed on the adjacent lands, whose owners, together with Colonel Nutcombe, to whom the deer belonged, complained to the schoolmaster of the injuries they had suffered by his pupils; for which they were very severely threatened. Resentment for the present reproof, and fear of future chastisement, made them abscond from the school; and going into a brick alehouse, about half a mile from Tiverton, they accidentally met with some gipsies, who were then feasting and carousing. This company consisted of seventeen, & had met for festivity and jollity; which, with plenty of meat, fowl, flowing cups of beer, cyder, &c., they enjoyed to their heart's content. In short, the freedom, mirth, and pleasure that appeared among them fascinated our youngsters, and they proposed to join company. The gipsies at first thought them in jest, but at length, perceiving they were serious, consented; and, going through the requisite ceremonials, and taking the proper oaths, they were admitted into the gang.

The reader will cease to wonder at such oaths and ceremonies among gipsies and beggars, on being informed that they are subject to a form of government and laws peculiar to themselves, and pay due obedience to one who is styled their king—to which honour Carew in a short tim

arrived, after having by many acts proved himself worthy of it The substance of them are these: Strong love and mutual regard for each member in particular, and the whole community in general; which being taught them from infancy, grows up with them, prevents oppressions, fraud, and over-reaching each other,—practices which greatly prevail, and lead to every evil. This happiness and temper of mind so wrought on Carew, as to occasion the strongest attachment to them for forty years, refusing very large offers that had been made him to quit their society.

He was thus initiate into the ancient society of gipsies, who take their name from Egypt, a place known to abound in learning, and whose inhabitants travelled about from place to place to communicate knowledge to mankind. Carew had not been long in it ere he was consulted in matters of importance. Madame Musgrove of Monkton, near Taunton, hearing of his fame, sent for him to consult in an affair of difficulty. When he was come, she informed him she suspected a large sum of money was buried about her house, and if he would point out the exact place she would handsomely reward him. He consulted the secrets of his art on this occasion, and after some time informed the lady, that under a laurel tree in the

garden lay the treasure she sought for, but that she must not seek it till such a day and hour. The lady rewarded him with twenty guineas; but whether Carew mistook his calculation, or the lady her lucky hour, we cannot tell; but we are obliged to say, that the lady dug as directed, but could find no treasure.

After some time he was more successful in his decisions, and gave general satisfaction by his wise & sagacious answers. In the mean time his parents sorrowed after him as one no more, having adversised him in all the public papers, and tent messengers after him to every part of the kingdom; till about a year and a half afterwards, when Carew, hearing of their grief, and being struck with tenderness, repaired to his father's house. He was so disguised they knew him not; but when they did their joy was beyond expression. They tenderly embraced him, bedewing his cheeks with tears and kisses, and all his friends & neighbours shewed demonstrations of joy at his return. His parents did every thing to render home agreeable to him; but the uncommon pleasure he enjoyed in the community he had left—their simplicity, freedom, sincerity, mirth, and frequent change of habitation—and the secret passages of the honour he had since arrived at, sickened and palled all

other diversions, and at last prevailed over his filial duty; for one day, without taking leave of his friends or parents, he went back to them again, and was welcomed with the greatest joy, they being glad to regain one who was so useful a member of their community.

Carew's first Adventure in his new Profession.

CAREW being again initiated among them, at the first general assembly of the gipsies, took the oaths of allegiance to their sovereign, by whom he was soon sent out on a cruise against their enemies. Carew now sets his wits to work how to succeed: so equipping himself with an old pair of trowsers, a piece of a jacket just enough to cover his nakedness, stockings full of holes, and an old woollen cap, he forgot both friends and family, and became nothing more or less than an unfortunate shipwrecked seaman.—In this his first excursion he gained much credit, artfully imitating passes and certificates that were necessary for him to travel unmolested. After a month's travel he happened to meet with his old schoolfellow Coleman, who had once left the gipsies' society, but for the same reason as himself returned to them again. Great was their joy at meeting, and they agreed to travel some time together; so entering Exeter, they in one

day raiſed a contribution of ſeveral pounds.

Having obtained all he could from this ſtratagem, he then became a plain, honeſt farmer, whoſe grounds had been overflowed and cattle drowned; his dejected countenance and mournful tale, together with a wife and ſeven helpleſs infants being partakers of his misfortunes, gained him both pity and profit.

Having obtained a conſiderable booty by theſe two ſtratagems, he returned to his companions, where he was received with great applauſe; and, as a mark of their regard, ſeated him next the king. He ſoon became a great man in his profeſſion, and confined not himſelf from doing good to others when it did not infringe upon the community of which he was a member.

His next ſtratagem was to become a madman; ſo ſtripping himſelf quite naked, he threw a blanket over him, and then he was "Poor mad Tom, whom the foul fiend has led through fire and through flame! through fire and whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; ſet ratsbane for his porridge, and made him proud at heart, to ride on a bay trotting horſe over four-inch bridges; to curſe his own ſhadow for a traitor; who eats the ſwimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt,

and the water-newt ; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages ſwallows the old rat and ditch dog; drinks the green mantle of the ſtanding pool ;

And mice and rats and such like gear,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

O do de, do de, do de ! bleſs thee from whirlwind, ſtar-blaſting, and taking! Do poor Tom ſome charity, whom the foul fiend vexes.—There I could have him now —and there!—and there !—and here again! —and there !—Through the ſharp hawthorn blows the cold wind—Tom's a-cold! —who gives any thing to poor Tom !"

In this character, with ſuch like expreſsions, he entered the houſes of both ſmall and great, committing all kinds of frantic actions, ſuch as offering to eat coals of fire, running againſt the wall, and tearing to pieces whatever garments were given to him to cover his nakedneſs; by which means he raiſed conſiderable contributions.

He had once the boldneſs to addreſs a juſtice, who was the terror and profeſſed enemy to all the gipſies, and managed the affair ſo well, that in a long examination he made him believe he was an honeſt miller, whoſe houſe, mill, and ſubſtance had been conſumed by fire, occaſioned by the negligence of the apprentice; and accordingly got a bountiful ſum for his relief.

He had ſuch wonderful facility in every

character he assumed, that he even deceived those who thought themselves so well acquainted with him, that it was impossible for him to impose on them.

Coming one day to Squire Portman's house at Blandford, in the character of a rat-catcher, with a hair cap on his head, a buff girdle about his waist, a little box by his side, and a tame rat in his hand, he goes boldly up to the house, where he had been well known before, and meeting the squire, Parson Bryant, and one Mr. Pleydell, of Milbourn, and some other gentlemen, he asked them, if they had any rats to kill? Do you understand the business well? says the squire. Yes, and please your honour, I have been a rat-catcher many years, and have been employed in his majesty's yards and ships.—Well, says the squire, go in and get some victuals, and after dinner we will try your abilities. He was accordingly called into the parlour, where were a large company of gentlemen and ladies. Well, honest rat-catcher, says the squire, can you lay any scheme to kill the rats without hurting my dogs? Yes, yes, cries Carew, I can do it. What countryman are you? A Devonshire-man, and please your honour. What is your name? [Here our hero began to perceive that he was discovered by the smilings and whisperings of several gentlemen.] He very composedly an-

ſwered, My name is Bampfylde Moore Carew. This occaſioned much mirth, and Mr. Pleydell expreſſed extraordinary pleaſure. He had often wiſhed to ſee him, but never had. Yes, you have, replies Carew, and given me a ſuit of clothes. Do you not remember meeting a poor wretch one day at your ſtable-door, with a ſtocking round his head, an old mantle over his ſhoulders, without ſhirt, ſtockings, or ſcarce any ſhoes, who told you he was a poor unfortunate man, caſt away on the coaſt, with ſixteen more of the crew, who were drowned; you, believing this ſtory, generouſly relieved me with a guinea and a ſuit of clothes. Mr. Pleydell ſaid, he well remembered it,—but on this diſcovery it was impoſsible he could be ſo deceived again. The company blamed him for thus boaſting, and ſecretly prevailed upon Carew to put his art in practice to convince him of the fallacy thereof: to which he agreed, and in a few days after appointing the company preſent to be at Mr. Pleydell's houſe, he adopted the following ſcheme:—

He ſhaved himſelf cloſely, and clothed himſelf in an old woman's apparel, with a high crowned hat, and a large dowdy under his chin; then taking three children from among his fraternity, he tied two on his back, and one under his arms. Thus accoutred, he comes to Mr. Pleydell's door,

and pinching one of the brats, ſet it a roaring; this gave the alarm to the dogs, who came out with open mouths, ſo that the whole company was ſoon alarmed. Out came the maid, ſaying, carry away the children, good woman, they diſturb the ladies. God bleſs their ladyſhips, I am the poor unfortunate grandmother of theſe helpleſs infants, whoſe mother and all they had were burnt at the dreadful fire at Kirton, and hope the good ladies, for God's ſake, will beſtow ſomething on the poor famiſhing, ſtarving infants. In goes the maid with this affecting ſtory to the ladies, while our grandmother keeps pinching the children to make them cry, and the maid ſoon returned with half-a-crown and ſome good broth, which he thankfully received, and went into the court-yard to ſit down to ſup them, as perceiving the gentlemen were not at home. He had not long been there before they came, when one of them accoſted him thus: Where did you come from, old woman? From Kirton, pleaſe your honours, where the poor unhappy mother of theſe helpleſs infants was burnt in the flames, and all ſhe had conſumed. D——n you, ſaid one of them, there has been more money collected for Kirton than ever Kirton was worth. However, they gave the old grandmother a ſhilling, commiſerating the hard caſe of her and her

helpleſs infants, which he thankfully received, pretending to go away: but the gentlemen were hardly got into the houſe, before their ears were ſuddenly ſaluted with a tantivy, and a hollo to the dogs; on which they turned about, ſuppoſing it to be ſome other ſportſmen; but ſeeing nobody, they directly ſuppoſed it to be Carew, in the diſguiſe of the old Kirton grandmother; ſo bidding the ſervants fetch her back, ſhe was brought into the parlour among them all, and confeſſed himſelf to be the famous Mr. Bampfylde Moore Carew, to the aſtoniſhment and mirth of them all; who well rewarded him for the diverſion he had afforded them.

In like manner he raiſed a contribution, twice in one day, of Mr. Jones, near Briſtol. In the morning, with a ſooty face, leather apron, a dejected countenance, and a woollen cap, he was generouſly relieved as an unfortunate blackſmith, whoſe all had been conſumed by fire. In the afternoon he exchanged his legs for crutches, and became a diſabled tinner, incapable of maintaining a wife and ſeven ſmall children, by the damps and hardſhips he had ſuffered in the mines; and ſo well acted his part, that the tinner got as well relieved in the afternoon as the blackſmith in the morning.

Theſe ſucceſsful ſtratagems gained him high applauſe and honour in the commu-

nity of gipſies. He ſoon became the favourite of their king, who was very old and decrepid, and had always ſome mark of diſtinction aſsigned him at their aſſemblies.

Being one morning near the ſeat of his good friend Sir William Courtney, he was reſolved to pay him three viſits that day. He therefore puts on a parcel of rags, and goes to him with a piteous, mean, diſmal countenance, and deplorable tale, and got half-a-crown from him, telling him he had met with great misfortunes at ſea. At noon puts on a leather apron ſcorched with fire, and goes to him again, and with a dejected countenance, was relieved as an unfortunate ſhoemaker, who had been burnt out of his houſe and all he had. In the afternoon he goes again in trimmed clothes: and deſiring admittance to Sir William, with a modeſt grace and ſubmiſſive eloquence, he repeats his misfortunes, as the ſupercargo of a veſſel which had been caſt away, and his whole effects loſt.

Sir William gave him a guinea at his departure. There were ſeveral gentlemen at dinner with Sir William at that time, none of whom had any knowledge of him except the Rev. Mr. Richards, who did not diſcover him till he was gone; upon which a ſervant was deſpatched to deſire him to come back, which he did; and when he entered the room, they were very

merry with him, and desired him to give an account how he got his fine clothes, and of all his stratagems, with the success of them. He asked Sir William if he had not given half a crown in the morning to a beggar, and about noon relieved a poor unfortunate shoemaker? I did, said Sir William. Behold him before you, said Carew, in this fine embroidered coat as a broken merchant. The company would not believe him;—so, to convince them, he re-assumed those characters again, to their no small mirth and satisfaction.

Carew made King of the Beggars.

ON the death of the king of the gipsies, named Clause Pitch, our hero was a candidate to succeed him, and exhibited to the electors a long list of bold and ingenious stratagems which he had executed, and made so graceful and majestic an appearance in his person, that he had a considerable majority of voices, though there were ten candidates for the same honour; on which he was declared duly elected, and hailed by the whole assembly, King of the Gipsies.—The public register of their acts being immediately committed to his care, and homage done him by all the assembly, the whole concluded with rejoicings.

Though Mr. Carew was now privileged,

by the dignity of his office, from going on any cruiſe, and was provided with every thing neceſſary, by the joint contribution of the community, yet he did not give himſelf up to indolence. Our hero, though a king, was as active in his ſtratagems as ever, and ready to encounter any difficulty which ſeemed to promiſe ſucceſs.

Mr. Carew being in the town of South Molton, in Devon, and having been ill uſed by an officer there called the bellman, reſolved on the following ſtratagem, by way of revenge. It was at that time reported that a gentleman of the town, lately buried, walked nightly into the church-yard, and as the bellman was obliged by his nightly duty to go through it juſt at the very hour of one, Mr. Carew repaired thither a little before the time, and ſtripping, in his ſhirt lay down upon the gentleman's grave. Soon after, hearing the bellman approach, he raiſed himſelf up with a ſolemn ſlowneſs, which the bellman beholding by the glimmerings of the moon through a dark cloud, was terribly frightened, ſo took to his heels and ran away. In his fright he looked behind him, and ſeeing the ghoſt following him, dropped his bell, and ran the faſter; which Carew ſeized on as a trophy, and forbore any further purſuit. The bellman did not ſtop till he reached home, where he obſtinately

affirmed he had ſeen the gentleman's ghoſt, who had taken away the bell, which greatly alarmed the whole town.

Coming to the ſeat of Squire Rhodes, in Devonſhire, and knowing he had lately married a Dorſetſhire lady, he thought proper to become a Dorſetſhire man, of Lyme, the place of the lady's nativity; and meeting the ſquire and his bride, he gave them to underſtand that he was ſhipwrecked in a veſſel belonging to Lyme, Captain Courtney, commander. The ſquire and his lady gave him half-a-crown each, for country ſake, and very well entertained him at their houſe.

Our hero exerciſing his profeſsion at Milbury, where the ſquire's father lived, and to whom the ſon was come on a viſit, Mr. Carew made application to him, and knocking at the door, on its being opened, ſaw the young ſquire ſitting alone, whom Mr. Rhodes interrupted by ſaying, he was twice in one day impoſed on by that rogue Carew, of whoſe gang you may likely be; beſides, I do not live here, but am a ſtranger. In the mean time comes the old ſquire, with a bottle of wine in his hand, giving Carew a wink to let him underſtand he knew him, and then very gravely enquired into the circumſtances of his misfortunes, and alſo of the affairs and inhabitants of Dartmouth, from whence he

pretended to have failed ſeveral times, of all which he gave a full and particular account: whereupon the old ſquire gave him half-a-crown, and the young one the ſame; on which Carew and the old man burſt into laughter, and diſcovered the whole affair, at which Squire Rhodes was a little chagrined at being impoſed on a third time; but on recollecting the expertneſs of the performer, was well ſatisfied, and they ſpent the remainder of the day in mirth and jollity.

At Briſtol he dreſſed himſelf like a poor mechanic, and then going out into the ſtreets, acts the religious madman, talking in a raving manner about Meſſrs. Whitfield and Weſley, as though he was diſordered in his mind by their preaching; calling in a furious manner, every ſtep, upon the Virgin Mary, Pontius Pilate, and Mary Magdalene, and acting every part of a man religiouſly mad. Sometimes walking with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and then on a ſudden he would break out in ſome paſſionate expreſſion about religion. This behaviour greatly excited the curioſity and compaſſion of the people: ſome of them talked to him, but he anſwered every thing they ſaid in a wild and incoherent manner; and as compaſſion is generally the forerunner of charity, he was relieved by moſt of them.

Next morning he appeared in a morning gown, ſtill acting the madman, and addreſsed himſelf to all the poſts of the ſtreet, as if they were ſaints, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, in a fervent but diſtracted manner, and making uſe of ſo many extravagant geſtures, that he aſtoniſhed the whole city. Going through Caſtle-ſtreet, he met the Rev. Mr. B——e, whom he accoſted with his arms thrown round him, and inſiſted, in a raving manner, he ſhould tell him who was the father of the morning ſtar;—which frightened the parſon ſo much that he took to his heels and ran for it, Carew running after him, till the parſon for ſafety, was obliged to take ſhelter in a houſe.

Having well recruited his pocket by this ſtratagem, he left Briſtol next day, and travelled towards Bath, acting the madman all the way till he came to Bath: as ſoon as he came there, he enquired for Dr. Coney, and being directed to his houſe, found two brother mendicants at the door. After they had waited ſome time, the ſervant brought out each of them a halfpenny, for which his brother mendicants were very thankful; but Mr. Carew gave his halfpenny, to one of them: then knocking at the door, and the maid coming out again, tell your maſter, ſays he, I am not a halfpenny man, but that my name is Bamfylde Moore

Carew, king of the Mendicants; which being told, the Doctor came out with one of his daughters, and gave him ſixpence and a mug of drink, for which he returned them thanks.

Mr. Carew happening to be in the city of Wells on a Sunday, was told the biſhop was to preach that morning: on which he ſlips on a black waiſtcoat and morning gown, and runs out to meet the biſhop as he was walking in proceſsion, and addreſſed himſelf to him as a poor unhappy man, whoſe misfortunes had turned his brains; which the biſhop hearing, gave him money.

It was in Newcaſtle upon Tyne that he became enamoured with the daughter of Mr. G—y, an eminent apothecary and ſurgeon there. This young lady had charms ſufficient to captivate the heart of any man ſuſceptible of love, and they made ſo deep an impreſsion upon him that they wholly effaced every object which before had created any deſire in him, and never permitted any other to raiſe them afterwards; for, wonderful to tell, we have, after about thirty years' enjoyment, ſeen him lament her occaſional abſence almost with tears, and talk of her with all the fondneſs of one who has been in love with her but three days. Our hero tried all love's perſuaſions with hisf air one in an honourable way; and as his perſon was very engaging, and his appearance gen-

teel, he did not find her greatly averſe to his propoſals. As he was aware that his being of the community of gipſies might prejudice her againſt him, without examination, he paſſed with her for the mate of a collier's veſſel, in which he was ſupported by Captain L—n, in whoſe veſſel they ſet ſail, and the very winds being willing to favour theſe happy lovers, they had an exceeding quick paſſage to Dartmouth, where they landed. In a few days they ſet out for Bath, where they lawfully ſolemnized their nuptials, with great gaiety and ſplendour, and nobody at that time could conjecture who they were, which was the cauſe of much ſpeculation and falſe ſurmiſes.

Some time after this, he took his paſſage at Folkſtone, in Kent, for Bolougne, in France, where he arrived ſafe, and proceeded to Paris, and other noted cities of that kingdom. His habit was now tolerably good, his countenance grave, his behaviour ſober and decent—pretending to be a Roman Cathoiic, who had left England, his native country, out of an ardent zeal for ſpending his days in the boſom of the Catholic church. This ſtory readily gained belief; his zeal was univerſally applauded, and handſome contributions made for him; but at the time he was ſo zealous a Roman Catholic, with a little change of habit, he uſed to addreſs thoſe Engliſh he heard of in any

place, as a proteſtant, and ſhipwrecked ſeaman; and had the good fortune to meet with an Engliſh phyſician at Paris, to whom he told this deplorable tale, who not only relieved him very handſomely, but recommended him to that noble pattern of unexhauſted benevolence, Mrs. Horner, who was then on her travels, from whom he received ten guineas, and from ſome other company with her five more.

It was about this time he became acquainted with the Hon. Sir William W———m, in the following manner:—Being at Watchett, in Somerſetſhire, near the ſeat of that gentleman, he reſolved to pay him a viſit; putting on, therefore, a jacket and a pair of trowſers, he made the beſt of his way to Sir William's ſeat, and luckily met Sir William, Lord Bolingbroke, and ſeveral other gentlemen and clergy, with ſome commanders of veſſels, walking in the park. He addreſſed Sir William with a great deal of ſeeming fearfulneſs and reſpect; and with much modeſty acquainted him he was a Silverton man, that he was the ſon of one of his tenants named Moore, had been to Newfoundland, and in his paſſage homeward, the veſſel was run down by a French ſhip in a fog, and only him and two more were ſaved; but being put on board an Iriſh veſſel, were carried into Ireland, and from thence landed at Watchett.—Sir William hearing this, aſked

him a great many queſtions concerning the inhabitants of Silverton, who were moſt of them his own tenants, and of the principal gentlemen in the neighbourhood; all which Carew was well acquainted with, and therefore gave ſatisfactory anſwers. Sir William at laſt asked him if he knew Bickley, and if he knew the parſon thereof? Carew replied, that he knew him very well, (and ſo indeed he might, as it was no other than his own father!) Sir William then enquired what family he had, and whether he had not a ſon named Bamfylde, and what became of him? "Your honour, (replied he,) means the beggar and dog-ſtealer—I don't know what has become of him, but it is a wonder if he is not hanged by this time—" No, I hope not, (replied Sir William,) I ſhould be glad, for his family's ſake, to ſee him at my houſe." Having ſatisfactorily anſwered many other queſtions, Sir William generouſly relieved him with a guinea, and Lord Bolingbroke followed his example; the other gentlemen and clergy contributed according to their different ranks. Sir William then ordered him to go to his houſe, and tell the butler to entertain him, which he accordingly did, and ſet himſelf down with great comfort.

On his return home, he reflected how idly he had ſpent the prime of life; and recovering from a ſevere illneſs, he came to a reſolution of reſigning the Egyptian ſcep-

tre. The assembly finding him determined, reluctantly acquiesced, and he departed amid the applauses and sighs of his subjects.

Our adventurer finding the air of the town not rightly to agree with him, and the death of some of his relations rendering his circumstances quite easy, he retired to the western parts, to a neat purchase he had made, and there he ended his days, beloved and esteemed by all; leaving his daughter (his wife dying some time before him) a genteel fortune, who was married to a neighbouring young gentleman.

W. & T. Fordyce, Printers, 15, Grey Street, Newcastle.